

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 518

By Beck

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the Grand Ole Opry on its 5,000th Saturday night broadcast.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are proud to specially recognize a legendary institution that has contributed significantly to the country music industry and brought acclaim to the State of Tennessee the world over; and

WHEREAS, on October 30, 2021, the Grand Ole Opry will send over the airwaves its 5,000th Saturday night broadcast, a momentous occasion in the history of this touchstone of American culture; and

WHEREAS, "the show that made country music famous" began on Saturday, November 28, 1925, when a young announcer on Nashville radio station WSM introduced an eighty-year-old fiddle player, Uncle Jimmy Thompson, as the first performer on a new show called *The WSM Barn Dance*; and

WHEREAS, announcer George D. Hay, who labeled himself "The Solemn Old Judge," but was neither old nor a judge, realized he had started a good thing that fateful night; and

WHEREAS, this acclaimed radio show followed an NBC network radio program on Saturday nights called *The Music Appreciation Hour*; in 1928, Mr. Hay announced on the air, "For the past hour we have been listening to music taken largely from the Grand Opera, but now we will present the Grand Ole Opry"; the name stuck and the rest is history; and

WHEREAS, crowds of people would come to the studio and stand in corridors to enjoy the Grand Ole Opry in person; WSM then decided to move the Opry to its own home, Studio C, wisely believing that the reactions of an enthusiastic audience of 500 fans would greatly enhance the program; and

WHEREAS, the crowds kept growing, and the Opry was forced to move again and again, first to the Hillsboro Theatre in southeast Nashville and then to the Dixie Tabernacle, the War Memorial Auditorium, the Ryman Auditorium, and, finally, in 1974, its current location at the Grand Ole Opry House; and

WHEREAS, it was not until 1938 that singing claimed its rightful place alongside the instrumental music for which the Opry had become renowned; Roy Acuff and the Smoky Mountain Boys warbled such classics as "The Wabash Cannonball" and "The Great Speckled Bird" at the Ryman; and

WHEREAS, in 1939, the NBC Radio Network began carrying a portion of the Opry as a network show; over the next decades, such outstanding entertainers as Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs, Ernest Tubb, Red Foley, Hank Williams, Porter Wagoner, Patsy Cline, Tammy Wynette, Hank Snow, Marty Robbins, Minnie Pearl, Ray Price, Grandpa Jones, George Morgan, and Kitty Wells became favorites across the nation; and

WHEREAS, in later years, the Grand Ole Opry saw the addition of country music legends Loretta Lynn, Bill Anderson, Dottie West, Connie Smith, Jack Greene, Jim Ed Brown, Charley Pride, and Dolly Parton; and

WHEREAS, the musical magic of the Grand Ole Opry continues today as thousands of people make pilgrimages every year to see and hear the greatest acts in country music perform live, including such members of the Opry family as Trace Adkins, Dierks Bentley, Garth Brooks, Vince Gill, Emmylou Harris, Alan Jackson, Alison Krauss, Barbara Mandrell, Martina McBride, Brad Paisley, Blake Shelton, Ricky Skaggs, Marty Stuart, Randy Travis, Carrie Underwood, Keith Urban, and Trisha Yearwood, to name just a few of the artists; and

WHEREAS, millions more tune in to Opry broadcasts via the Grand Ole Opry app, Sirius XM Satellite Radio, Nashville's 650 AM WSM, and the Opry and WSM 650 AM websites; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud the Grand Ole Opry and its remarkable members on the celebration of their 5,000th Saturday night broadcast and commend them for their countless contributions to the music industry, to the city of Nashville, and to the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor the legendary Grand Ole Opry on the occasion of its 5,000th Saturday night broadcast on October 30, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.